



For more information about Prison-Based Gerrymandering, see our website and weekly newsletter at <http://www.prisonersofthecensus.org>

Prison-Based Gerrymandering Profile

Claiming incarcerated people as residents is the only reason that 7 New York State Senate districts meet minimum population requirements. Without the prison populations, these districts would have to be redrawn. One of those districts is:

New York Senate District 45

Represented by Betty Little (R,C,I), 2002–present
 Counties: Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton, Warren, Washington

Average population of a NY Senate district: 306,072

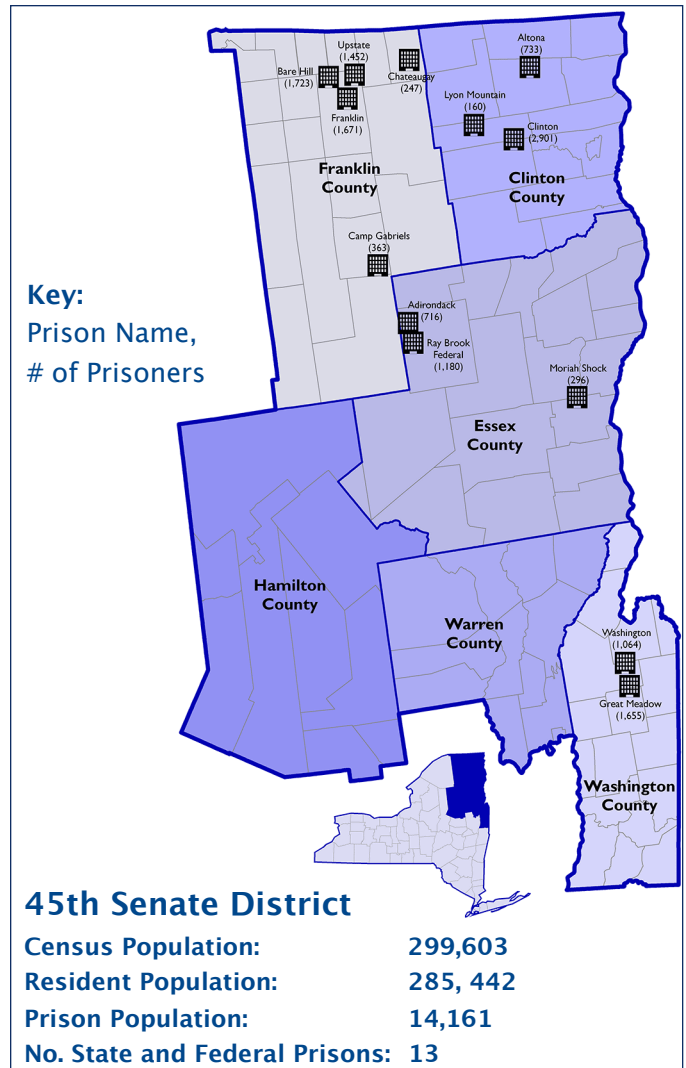
District 45: Census Population: 299,603
 Prison Population: 14,161
 Resident Population: 285,442
 State and federal prisons: 13

Political Economy of District 45

- District has a larger prison population than any other district.
- District 45 has so many prisons because from the previous incumbent was one of the most powerful state senators. From 1965 to 2002, the district was represented by Ronald Stafford. The son of a corrections officer, Stafford was elected to the state senate at age 29 and rose to one of the most powerful positions: head of the Finance Committee with control over spending. When the state spent money, Stafford made sure it was spent in his district.
- Prior to being elected to the Senate, Betty Little was in the Assembly for 7 years, primarily focusing on other issues. But the large prisons in her new Senate district have started to change her priorities.

Her constituents do not support the Census Bureau's prison count

Senator Little is one of the few elected officials in New York to speak out against Census reform. She argues that people in prison should be counted "where [they] are at the time of the census." But all four of the prison counties in her district disagree, each rejecting the prison numbers when drawing county legislative districts or apportioning the county board of supervisors.



Essex County even passed a law on the subject:

"Persons incarcerated in state and federal correctional institutions live in a separate environment, do not participate in the life of Essex County and do not affect the social and economic character of the towns...."

"The inclusion of these federal and state correctional facility inmates unfairly dilutes the votes or voting weight of persons residing in other towns within Essex County...."

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